

SECRET

SPECIAL DESIGNEES

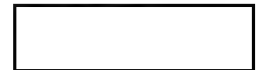
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PAGE 01

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Immediate

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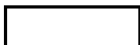


SECRET 091533Z DEC 75 SPECIAL DESIGNEES

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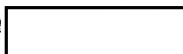
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TO: IMMEDIATE



HANDLE VIA TALENT-KEYHOLE CHANNELS ONLY



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DELIVER TO



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HEREWITH



1. FRONT PAGE OF THE HERALD TRIBUNE FOR 9 DEC, CARRIES
AN ARTICLE BY WILLIAM BEECHER IN WHICH KISSINGER'S UPCOMING
TRIP TO MOSCOW FROM 18-20 DEC, IS SAID TO BE PROMPTED BY
BREZHNEV'S RAPIDLY FAILING HEALTH. ACCORDING TO BEECHER, THE
KREMLIN LEADERSHIP HAS BEEN SUFFERING FROM ITS OWN PROBLEMS
OF DISARRAY AND HAS BEEN UNABLE TO FOCUS ON SALT. DOBRYNIN
REPORTEDLY PASSED A MESSAGE TO KISSINGER FROM BREZHNEV PRIOR
TO FORD'S CHINA TRIP ASKING HIM TO COME.

2. BEECHER APPEARS TO HAVE GOOD ACCESS. CAN WE CORROBORATE
ANY OF HIS POINTS, ESPECIALLY WITH REGARD TO BREZHNEV'S
HEALTH? MEMO TO THE DCI IN EARLY DEC. TENDS TO PLAY
DOWN THE HEALTH ANGLE, ESPECIALLY WITH RESPECT TO A RAPID
DECLINE, BUT IT DOES INDICATE THAT BREZHNEV'S PACE DURING 1975

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Approved For Release 2002/05/07 : CIA-RDP80T00294A001200070011-3 SPECIAL DESIGNEES

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HAS BEEN ONLY ABOUT 60 PERCENT OF LAST YEAR'S. PERHAPS THIS SLOWDOWN HAS BEEN ENOUGH TO HOLD UP DECISIONS ON SALT. ON THE OTHER HAND, ONE CANNOT RULE OUT A GAME OF TACTICS BEING PLAYED BETWEEN MOSCOW AND WASHINGTON. BEECHER PLAYS DOWN THIS LATTER EXPLANATION.

3. REQUEST ANY HQS COMMENTS ON BEECHER ARTICLE ASAP.

[REDACTED] THIS SAME QUESTION ON THE PHONE THIS MORNING.

E-2 IMPDET.

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